

WORKING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Aid For Our Towns

A very important part of my job representing the people of the 23rd state Senate District is ensuring **Bridgeport** and **Stratford** receive their fair share of state funding. I am pleased to report the following grants and reimbursements from the state in Fiscal Year 2009–2010:

Fiscal Year 09-10	
Total Education Grants	\$189,618,671
Town Aid Road Fund Grant	\$968,605
Mashantucket Pequot & Mohegan Fund Grant	\$6,299,970
Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP)	\$2,457,172
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$12,746,377
Total State Funds to the 23rd District	\$212,090,795

Earlier this year, I joined Senator Chris Dodd (far right), the New Haven Legal Assistance Association and the Yale Legal Services Organization at a news conference in Hartford to highlight the plight of renters in the foreclosure crisis. I discussed proposed state legislation that would seek more protection for tenants in foreclosures. The New Haven groups outlined a request they had made to seven national banks to stop automatically evicting all tenants after foreclosing on properties.



Bridgeport Residents, Taxpayers & Jobs Protected

These are tough times for Bridgeport. This year, the Bridgeport legislative delegation and I pushed legislation that will help spare the city’s taxpayers from a huge increase in their property taxes by relieving the city of its pension fund obligation to police and firefighters for the next two years. Both the police and the firefighters agreed with this move, and residents will be saved from tens of millions of dollars in property tax increases. Also, I supported the creation of a new law that gives municipalities and local taxpayers some relief from revaluations by giving them an option to amend their regular, five-year schedule. With costs as high as \$60 per parcel, this law could provide significant savings for local property owners.



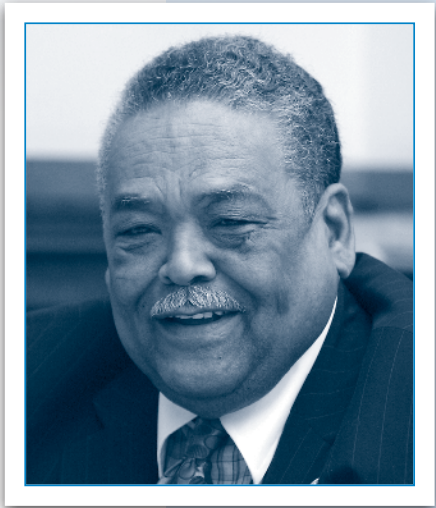
Funding Saved for Stratford School Safety

Nothing is more important than the safety of our children, which is why I worked to protect funding threatened by the executive branch for school security improvements in Stratford. With this support, Stratford will be able to make important upgrades—like cameras, entryway systems and scan cards—to help make security systems better in seven local schools. In total, Stratford received \$110,637 that Democrats fought to protect this year for school security improvements.



State Senator
Edwin Gomes


Legislative Office Building, Room 3100, Hartford, CT 06106-1591
Capitol Phone: 1-800-842-1420
E-mail: Gomes@senatedems.ct.gov
Web: www.SenatorGomes.cga.ct.gov



Dear Neighbor,


The global recession has hit Connecticut hard. People have lost their jobs and even their homes. At the same time, the state’s budget deficit reached a record high of \$8.5 billion. Our challenge this legislative session was not simply to balance the budget; we were determined to help grow jobs and protect working families and middle-class folks who are struggling to survive the recession. We did it by passing a fair budget that makes tough cuts, protects funding for education and small businesses, and avoids across-the-board tax increases. I’m also pleased that we passed bills that will help fight breast cancer and autism, assist those facing foreclosure and preserve our environment.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Edwin Gomes
State Senator

I’m proud to represent the
23rd Senate District:
**Bridgeport
& Stratford**

Staying Informed in a “Green” Way



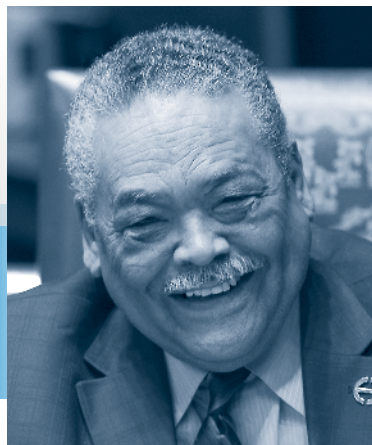
Find us on
Facebook

What’s happening at the State Capitol and around the state? Follow the Senate Democrats on Facebook and find out. It’s paperless, informative and immediate: www.facebook.com/CTSenateDemocrats



This newsletter has been printed on FSC-certified 10 percent post-consumer recycled paper. Please share or recycle when done.

PSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HARTFORD CT
PERMIT NO. 3937



**State Senator
Edwin Gomes**
23rd District

Serving Bridgeport & Stratford

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Fighting for a Fair Budget

In September, the General Assembly and Governor Rell agreed on a budget for the next two years. The compromise budget includes more than **\$3 billion in spending cuts—the largest reduction in state history**. We did it by cutting costs in every agency and all parts of government.

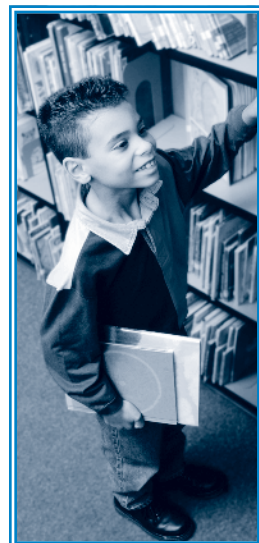
At the same time, we were able to protect middle-class families, the elderly, children and the poor from devastating cuts to critical services. Democrats also made the tax code fairer by raising revenues from joint filers making more than \$1 million a year. The budget will help stabilize Connecticut's economy and help families survive this difficult time.



Protecting Families from Reckless Cuts

Despite efforts by some to make reckless cuts, I stood up for these and other important programs and services:

- ▶ **The LIFE STAR** medical helicopter has helped save lives in every town and city in Connecticut.
- ▶ **Higher education scholarships** help students and their parents afford college. A recession is the worst time to reduce scholarships and financial aid.
- ▶ **Public libraries** add so much to our towns and cities. Across-the-board cuts, as some proposed, would have hit them hard.
- ▶ **School-based health centers** help protect children from epidemics, such as the flu. Deep cuts to these centers would have undermined public health.



MAKING STRIDES IN HEALTH CARE

Comprehensive Reform On the Way

Skyrocketing health care costs are squeezing businesses and families. President Obama has said the status quo is unaffordable—that's why he's fighting for national reform and why we're working hard on health care in Connecticut.

Thanks to the passage of Sustinet, Connecticut is well positioned to be a national leader on health care reform. This bold initiative seeks to overhaul the state's health care system by focusing on improved quality and access to services, addressing coverage for the uninsured and controlling skyrocketing costs. The legislature will receive detailed recommendations in 2011 with the goal of lowering costs and expanding access.



Fighting Breast Cancer With Early Detection

A key part in the fight against breast cancer is early detection, which is why the General Assembly enacted legislation that focuses on communication of mammographic breast density information to patients. When applicable, all mammography reports given to a patient must include this notice: "If your mammogram demonstrates that you have dense breast tissue, which could hide small abnormalities, you might benefit from supplementary screening tests, which can include a breast ultrasound screening or a breast MRI examination."

Health Insurance for Autism

Help is on the way for the thousands of families in Connecticut with children who suffer from autism spectrum disorders. The General Assembly approved groundbreaking legislation that made Connecticut the tenth state in the nation to mandate comprehensive health insurance coverage for autism. It requires certain health insurance policies to cover the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders, including behavioral therapy for a child age 15 or younger and certain prescription drugs and psychiatric and psychological services. This will improve treatment for children with autism and provide a substantial savings in medical costs for their families.



HELPING FAMILIES SURVIVE THE RECESSION

For Those on the Brink of Foreclosure

The housing market crash has had a devastating effect on our state and national economies. Connecticut has been a leader in its effort to keep people in their homes and stabilize property values for all homeowners. We built on that success this year by expanding two important mortgage assistance programs. A new law now requires banks and homeowners to work together to explore options before any foreclosure takes place. The law also improves regulation of mortgage professionals and expands the banking commissioner's enforcement and investigative authority.



Helping Those Who've Sacrificed for Our State and Country

Many families are having a hard time making ends meet right now, and this includes military families. The General Assembly passed legislation that expands eligibility for the Military Relief Fund to immediate relatives of Connecticut-domiciled armed forces members, including Connecticut National Guard members who are not on active duty. This fund is used by the state to pay for essential personal or household goods or services, such as repairs, uninsured medical services, transportation or school supplies if paying for them is a hardship because of a member's service.



At-Home Care for the Elderly

Many senior citizens in Connecticut will soon have increased access to personal, non-medical care due to the enactment of a new law I supported. Qualifying seniors can receive financial aid for in-home personal care assistants to help with such things as bathing, dressing and meal preparation. This approach is more desirable for seniors and more cost-effective for the state. It allows elderly residents to hire their preferred assistants without using a home health-care agency.